

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## WHAT AMERICANS THINK ABOUT FAST TRACK AND NAFTA EXPANSION

**HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 1997*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, it may surprise some of my colleagues that the majority of Americans believe labor and environmental issues should be negotiated as part of trade agreements. In fact, this isn't a majority of 51 percent, 55 percent, or even 60 percent. It is a vast majority of 73 percent. Seventy-three percent of Americans believe that protecting the environment and protecting labor rights should be integral part of trade agreements.

I completely agree.

Apparently, the administration does not. Unfortunately, the administration's fast-track proposal does not reflect the feelings of the vast majority of Americans. The administration's proposal falls far short. To be truthful, it's even a step backward from fast-track proposals under Reagan and Bush. Under the administration's proposal, the President would be forbidden from including labor, environmental, and other standards of the same enforceable, core nature as now are provided for the protection of intellectual property or investors' rights. The proposal isn't a bridge to the 21st century—it's slide back to the 19th century. There truly seems to be a disconnect with the administration and the American people.

In my opinion, and that of the vast majority of Americans, fast-track legislation must include enforceable labor and environmental provisions. To do anything less would be shortchanging working families across our country. It would further compromise our environment, the safety of our foods, the wages of American workers, and our overall quality of life.

Where's the evidence? Well, we have 3 years' worth of evidence from NAFTA. It has been 3 years since this broken trade agreement went into effect, and the evidence is clear that NAFTA has failed for the American working man and woman. Our modest trade surplus with Mexico has ballooned into a huge deficit. We've lost hundred of thousands of jobs. Moreover, the evidence shows that the much ballyhooed labor and environmental side agreements in NAFTA are hugely ineffective. In the United States employers used NAFTA as a tool to fight unions and keep wages down. Companies effectively intimidate workers and stymie union organizing efforts by threatening to move jobs to Mexico. And the health of working families are threatened by increased industrial and toxic emissions and waste along the United States-Mexico border.

NAFTA failed because it failed to protect workers' rights and the environment. It deeply concerns me that NAFTA protects intellectual property rights and investors' rights while it turns a blind eye to workers and the environment. There are more protections for compact

discs and Wall Street financial investors than there are for the Smith family next door and our rivers and streams.

We've seen what happens with a trade agreement that does not include adequate labor and environmental protections, and it certainly isn't pretty. Let us learn from it.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to carefully evaluate these vitally important trade issues in the coming weeks. I strongly urge my colleagues to carefully evaluate the impact of NAFTA expansions and fast-track legislation on American workers and American families. Let's listen to the American people.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE INDIANA STATE LEAGUE OF UNITED LATIN AMERICAN CITIZENS

**HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKEY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 1997*

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to congratulate the Indiana State League of United Latin American Citizens [LULAC] as it hosts a reception in honor of LULAC national president, Belen Robles, tonight, September 26, 1997, at the Empress Casino in Hammond, IN. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Indiana LULAC State officers, Maria Pizana, Vicki Lipiniskis, Terry Serna, Andrew Martinez, Amelia Velez, and Louise Martinez, for the leadership they have displayed in organizing this special event. This marks the first time the Indiana State LULAC has honored a National LULAC President.

Founded in 1929 in Corpus Christi, TX, LULAC was established to protect the constitutional rights and freedoms of Hispanic-Americans. Over the years, LULAC has improved the social and economic status of Hispanics through its activism in the areas of equal justice, housing, employment, and education. By 1954, LULAC had earned recognition for winning two landmark civil rights cases, which served to integrate the Orange County, CA school system, and secure jury duty rights for Mexican-Americans in Texas. Since that time, LULAC has worked hard to achieve full access to the political process for all Hispanics, as well as equal educational opportunity for Hispanic children. LULAC councils across the Nation work toward this goal by holding voter registration drives and citizen awareness sessions, sponsoring health fairs and tutorial programs, and raising scholarship money for the LULAC national scholarship fund. In addition, LULAC's activism has expanded to include the areas of language and cultural rights. In response to a recent increase in anti-Hispanic sentiment, LULAC councils have fought back by holding seminars and public symposiums on language and immigration issues. The Nation's oldest and largest national Hispanic civil rights organization, LULAC continues to be a strong voice in the

struggle for equal opportunity for Hispanic-Americans.

The Indiana State LULAC has faithfully worked to fulfill the National LULAC mission through a strong commitment to community and education. The Indiana LULAC emphasizes the protection of civil and human rights for Hispanic citizens and immigrants, and it strives to achieve this goal by educating the Hispanic community. Extremely youth oriented, Indiana LULAC hosts annual career days and college fairs, provides numerous educational workshops and seminars for students, and offers several leadership training opportunities to students. In addition, Indiana LULAC continues to award scholarships to academic achievers throughout the State and, to date, has awarded over \$200,000 in college scholarships. In the future, the Indiana State LULAC aspires to open a LULAC National Education Center, which would provide counseling and tutorial services, scholarships, and low-interest loans to help Hispanic students attend college.

Belen Robles, the first female LULAC national president, has brought a new vision to LULAC. Belen, who works for the U.S. Customs Service, strives to structure LULAC more like a business in order to bring about a greater continuity within the organization. As a result, she has developed a 5-year strategic plan, which will establish a full-time national executive director for LULAC's Washington, DC office. In addition, LULAC is embarking on a membership campaign with the ambitious goal of increasing its current membership of 110,000 to 1 million members. As a law enforcement officer, Belen is knowledgeable about immigration issues, and she uses this knowledge to ensure that Hispanics will receive protection under current immigration law. In addition to her work with LULAC, Belen Robles is on the board of the El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, vice-chair of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, and she serves on the Federal Better Relations with Mexico Committee. In 1967, Belen Robles received a bronze Chamizal Medallion from President Lyndon Johnson in recognition of her efforts in the Cabinet-level hearings on Mexican-American affairs in El Paso, TX.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in commending the national and State of Indiana LULAC organizations for their tremendous efforts in uniting Hispanic-Americans. All involved in the success of these organizations should be proud of their efforts in working toward equality for Hispanic-Americans.

## HEROES KNOW HEROES

**HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 1997*

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, on August 5, 1997, in Bogota, Colombia, our outstanding

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